

Traffic Advisory Committee minutes for Wednesday, September 10, 2003

In attendance: M.J. Frisoli, L. Nickens, A. Masciari, P. Curro, T. Riley, T. Olsen, T. Turner:
K. Hamilton, BPD; T. Gatzunis, OCD

Absent: M. Gavin

Also attending: M. D'Andrea, W. Engstrom, P. Marinelli

7:05 p.m. Meeting called to order

Administrative items:

1. Minutes from previous TAC meetings. **MF** expressed concern that the TAC was well behind in making minutes available for public record. She committed to making previous minutes available and to improving reporting in the future.
2. DPW street painting. **MF** met with Mr. Castinino of the Belmont DPW to discuss progress on painting crosswalks and the requested parking strips on Grove St.
3. Bright/Grove/Blanchard Intersection improvements. **MF** met with Ms. Clipinger, Director of the Cambridge Department of Traffic, Parking, and Transportation, to discuss the respective roles of Belmont and Cambridge in the reconstruction of the Bright/Grove/Blanchard intersection. Bright Rd. is currently on the Add-Alt pavement management list for FY04. In response to public input, the Belmont BoS ordered the OCD to include this intersection in the FY05 pavement management plan. In response, OCD decided to bundle both project in FY05. **TO** voiced concern that pressure from a handful of individuals could alter priorities set under the existing pavement management plan. **TG** stated that the estimated cost of this project is ~\$250K, and, because the intersection spans the boundary between Cambridge and Belmont, that the two municipalities need to agree on splitting the costs. **LN** recommended that the existing plans be reviewed prior to any further design funds are spent. A plan review will likely be scheduled for the October TAC meeting, pending an updated 9-hour traffic count to be conducted in September. A public hearing on the plan is tentatively planned for January 2004.
4. Marlboro/Belmont St. update. A request by Marlboro St. residents to create a turn restriction from Belmont St. (westbound) onto Marlboro (e.g., "No Right Turn, 4pm to 7pm") has been reviewed. **KH** expressed limited enthusiasm for any such restrictions, but reported that further action will be considered pending the results of a traffic count at that location.
5. Washington/School intersection. TAC has recommended, and the BoS has approved, the installation of a 4-Way Stop at Washington and School near Chenery Middle School.
6. Future TAC meetings. TAC will meet on 09-24, 10-22, 11-19, and 12-03.
7. Planning Board Subcommittee. The Planning Board Transportation Subcommittee has asked the TAC to send a representative to its upcoming meetings regarding the Trapelo Rd. corridor study. Various members of TAC volunteered to attend the upcoming meetings scheduled for 10-07, 10-28, 11-04, 11-18, and 12-02.

Report from T. Gatzunis—Pavement Management (7:52 p.m.). **TG** reported that the White St. project is "99% complete". A radar speedometer on White St. to monitor northbound vehicle speeds is set to be installed and operating on 09-11. **KH** reported that residents of Thayer St. were concerned about parking on the west side of White St. between Trapelo and Thayer remains in place. Vehicles often park too close to the White/Thayer intersection, blocking access to Thayer. **KH** stated that those spaces will remain to accommodate patrons of nearby business, and encouraged Thayer St. residents to contact BPD to report illegally parked cars so that they may be towed.

In addition, **TG** reports that Mass Highway will advertise for bids on the Pleasant St. project on Saturday, September 13, 2003.

MF indicated that she had received correspondence from residents regarding the layout of new “International Design” crosswalks, specifically at the intersection of White and Trapelo. **Mark D’Andrea**, chairman of the Belmont Citizens’ Forum Traffic and Transportation Committee, wrote to ask why the new crosswalk at that location was painted such that the stripes run perpendicular to Trapelo Rd. rather than parallel to the direction of travel. Due to the acute angle of this intersection, the current configuration with the stripes perpendicular to Trapelo Rd. appear to be diagonal as drivers approach the intersection.

MF opened the floor to comments from those in attendance at 8:22 p.m. **Paolo Marinelli** spoke briefly to commend the OCD on the rapid progress made in Belmont on instituting the international design in the last two years. **William Engstrom** expressed concern that the crosswalk at White and Trapelo did not meet the international design criteria that state that the design “mandates that the stripes be painted parallel to the direction of vehicle travel, and that this criterion was not met at White and Trapelo”. **TG** stated that because this intersection is not at a right angle, it was not possible to paint the stripes parallel to the direction of travel because the painting process uses a stencil, and that creating a stencil for each intersection would be prohibitive. (N.B. Despite this assertion, a staggered design such as that suggested by Mr. D’Andrea was painted at the intersection of Church and Lexington the same day as the one at White/Trapelo).

Report from Sgt. Hamilton (8:30 p.m.) Pine St parking restrictions. The reconstruction of Pine St nears completion. Because the new granite curbing will narrow the functional width of Pine St. between Spruce and Trapelo, the BPD traffic division will recommend to the BoS that a parking restriction be implemented on the west side of Pine. **KH** asked that the TAC act in support of this recommendation, as some residents of Pine St. might object to this plan. **TT** questioned whether such action is within the purview of TAC. **TO** moved that the TAC take such action (**TR** second). TAC votes 6-0 in favor (one abstention-**TT**).

KH informed the committee that a bill has been sponsored in the Massachusetts General Assembly to ban overnight truck travel (between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.) on Rt 60 in Medford and Arlington. **TT** added that a community group in Arlington had been working on this issue for some time due to oil tankers (J.P. Noonan according to **PC**) that use this route to travel from Everett to Rt 2 N.

Due to the insufficient time remaining, discussion of the traffic calming initiative at Trapelo Rd. and Hawthorne St., and a letter from a resident regarding traffic patterns at Leonard/Common/Concord would be tabled until the 09-24 meeting.

Action by writing (8:54 p.m.). **MF** informed TAC of a letter written by Mr. Harrington of Hawthorne St. regarding a sign posted at the intersection of Common and Trapelo in Cushing Sq. In brief, the sign advises pedestrians “Watch for Turning Vehicles While Crossing”. The warning appears to be at odds with Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 89 (Chapter 89: Section 8 Right-of-way at intersecting ways; turning on red signals) that allows drivers to make a right turn only after yielding to pedestrians. **TG** and **KH** indicated that they would take this matter under advisement.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:09 p.m.